

CHAPTER 2

ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT

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ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You are responsible for determining the membership status of your employees. If deductions are not made when mandatory membership applies, the member and school must “make-up” those contributions and NPERS will charge the school district for the interest that would have been earned.

MANDATORY MEMBERSHIP - The following employees *must* be enrolled at the date of hire or at time of position change:

1. Employees of a Nebraska school district, an educational service unit, the state or a county (if the position with the state or county requires a teaching certificate).
2. **Permanent employees** who work in positions requiring an average of at least **15 hours per week** on an **ongoing, regular** basis, or have a full-time contract (teacher or administrator). *If an employee who initially began working in a position of less than 15 hours per week starts working in another position requiring more than 15 hours per week, deductions should begin at that point.*
 - Each NPERS’ fiscal year (July 1 -- June 30), you should determine which employees meet the 15 hours per week guideline. Once contributions begin for a fiscal year they should continue through the current year and be reevaluated at the beginning of the next fiscal year.
3. **Retired employees** who become reemployed **15 or more** hours per week.

An Election of Non-membership is no longer valid if the employee (see page 2-2):

- had a break in service; or
- moved from a non-certified position to a certified position.

EMPLOYEES WHO CANNOT BE MEMBERS:

1. Employees whose current employment in Nebraska public schools is in a position of **less than** 15 hours per week.
2. Temporary and substitute employees not hired on an ongoing, regular basis, unless already eligible due to other position(s) within the Nebraska public schools.
3. Temporary residents of the United States who DO NOT have permanent resident alien status. Evidence includes possession of an Alien Registration Receipt Card I-151 (as of March 20, 1996, I-151 is no longer acceptable as evidence of permanent residence), or Permanent Resident Card I-551, Certificate of Naturalization or other equivalent documents issued by Immigration and Naturalization Services.
4. Non-certificated employees who hold a VALID non-membership. A valid non-membership is one held by a non-certificated employee who filed an Election of Non-membership with NPERS prior to July 1, 1978, and has been employed in a Nebraska public school continuously since that date. (See page 2-2.)

NONMEMBERS

Individuals employed prior to July 1, 1978, in a noncertificated position were eligible to file an Election of Nonmembership if they were employed one-half time or more and did not wish to be a member of the School Retirement System. This election had to be submitted prior to July 1, 1978. This type of nonmembership is valid only if the employee was employed one-half time or more from July 1, 1978, through June 30, 1986, and 15 hours or more per week from July 1, 1986, to the present time. A nonmembership is not valid if the employee ceases employment or becomes employed less than 15 hours per week.

Upon reemployment of 15 hours or more per week, the employee must become a member and begin deductions.

Individuals that had been employed in 1945 in a certificated position also may have filed an Election of Nonmembership if they were 21 years of age and did not wish to be a member of the School Retirement System. This election had to be submitted prior to October 1, 1945. This type of nonmembership is valid until the member terminates.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

NEW MEMBERS

Membership Registration Forms are no longer required as all necessary information is provided through Wage & Contribution Reporting!

New employees must file a Beneficiary Designation Form #NPERS1300 with NPERS. (See Forms Chapter.) This form must be completed **in full** and notarized by a Notary Public.

New employees who have previously been employed out-of-state may be eligible to purchase credit for the out-of-state service. (See Chapter 5, page 5-1.)

You should give a New Member Information Packet to all new employees and re-hires. The Packet should include:

- School Employees Retirement System Plan Booklet.
- Vesting Credit Application. (See sample, page 2-5.)
- Methods for Certifying Proof of Age information sheet (Rev. 12-02). (See sample, page 2-7.)
- Beneficiary Designation Form (Rev. 1-03). (See Forms Chapter.)

You may request quantities of these items from NPERS using the Order Blank #NPERS0450. (See Chapter 9, page 9-3 and Forms Chapter.)

PREVIOUS MEMBERS - REEMPLOYED (NON-RETIRES)

Employees who have previously been members of the Plan and are returning to work should complete a new Beneficiary Designation Form. Also, give reemployed members a Plan Booklet. Those members who received a refund may be eligible to repay a refund to the Plan and receive credit for prior years of service. (See Chapter 5, page 5-1.)

RETIRED MEMBERS (RECEIVING A RETIREMENT BENEFIT) – REEMPLOYED

Retirees who return to work after the required 180-day break-in-service will continue to receive their regular monthly retirement benefit.

A retired member who becomes reemployed as a permanent employee and who works at least 15 hours per week on an ongoing, regular basis or has a full-time contract should be reenrolled in the Plan and given a new Beneficiary Designation Form and Plan booklet.

VESTING CREDIT

Within the first **30 days** of employment, a school employee may apply for eligibility and vesting credit for years of participation in another Nebraska governmental plan. The Application for Vesting Credit form (see sample, page 2-7) must be submitted to NPERS for approval. The service in the other plan must be full-time or part-time to qualify. Such service credit will not be included as years of service for benefit calculations, but will apply to vesting.

It is ***your responsibility*** to give **all employees** an Application for Vesting Credit when they are hired ***whether you think they qualify or not***. This is because of the short time period within which employees may apply for vesting credit. It is then the responsibility of the employee to return the application to NPERS within 30 days of hire.

In addition, you must obtain an employee's written acknowledgment that they have received the Application for Vesting Credit. (See Appendix page 47, for Chapter 22 of the Retirement Rules and Regulations.)

SAMPLE FORM

APPLICATION FOR VESTING CREDIT



Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Systems
 1221 N Street, Suite 325
 P.O. Box 94816
 Lincoln, NE 68509

402-471-2053
 800-245-5712
 Fax: 402-471-9493

Name	Last <u>Doe</u>	First <u>Jane</u>	Middle <u>mae</u>	Date of Birth <u>2-13-68</u>	Plan Type (Check One)
Social Security Number	<u>987 -65 -4321</u>		Retirement Number		<input type="checkbox"/> School
Address	<u>1234 Treecop</u>		City <u>Mapleville</u>	State <u>NE</u>	Zip <u>60000</u>
Home Phone	<u>402-555-5555</u>	Work Phone	<u>402-506-5556</u>	Employer <u>Dixon Co. Sheriff</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Judges <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol <input type="checkbox"/> DCP

Application for Vesting Credit

You must use a separate form for each past Retirement Plan.
See reverse side for complete instructions.

Current Place of Employment Dixon Co. Sheriff's Office Date of Hire 1-22-99 ☒ FT ☐ PT

LIST ALL NEBRASKA PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

The following should be completed by you.
 Past participation must have been with a Nebraska Governmental Entity.

BELOW SHOULD REFLECT DATES YOU PARTICIPATED IN A NEBRASKA GOVERNMENTAL PENSION PLAN.

Place of Employment	Circle One	Dates of Participation
<u>Newcastle Public School</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Full Time / <input type="radio"/> Part Time	From <u>8-93</u> To <u>5-94</u>
<u>Newcastle Public School</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Full Time / <input type="radio"/> Part Time	From <u>9-94</u> To <u>5-95</u>
<u>Newcastle Public School</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Full Time / <input type="radio"/> Part Time	From <u>8-95</u> To <u>5-96</u>

Identify person to contact with the Government Plan:

Name Betty Web Department Newcastle Public Sc.
 Address P.O. Box 000 Newcastle NE Phone Number 402-555-5556

This form must be completed and received by the Retirement Office no later than 30 days after your date of hire.

I hereby certify and warrant that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing is true and correct.

Signature of Member

Jane Mae Doe

Date

2-18-2000

NPERS2100 REV.4/03

SAMPLE FORM (BACK)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR VESTING

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR VESTING

As a new employee you have 30 days from the date of your employment to make application for vesting credit.

“Vesting means to qualify for the employer contributions made on your behalf. In the school and state patrol plans this also means qualifying to receive a monthly retirement benefit.” The application must be filed with the Public Employees Retirement Systems within 30 days from the date you were hired.

All past retirement participation must be in Nebraska Governmental Plans. It is your responsibility to have the form properly completed and filed.

- **Complete a separate form for each past retirement plan**
- Print or type all the requested information

Top section

- **Current Place of Employment** is where you work now.
- **Date of Hire** is the date you commenced working in your new position. If you are with the State Patrol, this would be your date of graduation from camp. **Circle FT/PT** to indicate full or part time position.

Middle Section

- List your other Nebraska Governmental Retirement Plan information here.
- *Dates are the dates you were in the plan, not when you were employed.*

Sign the form and forward it to the Retirement Office immediately. Your Vesting Credit Application will be considered filed on time if mailed in an envelope properly addressed to the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Systems, postage prepaid, and postmarked before midnight of the final filing date. If the final filing date for such application falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the next secular or business day shall be the final filing date. If the application is not mailed, the date the application is received by NPERS shall be the date used to determine whether the application was timely filed.

NOTE: This is not a buy back. You will be notified by the Public Employees Retirement Board if you qualify for vesting credit. Vesting credit is not included in the calculation of your benefit.

If you need assistance, call the Retirement Office at 402-471-2053 (Lincoln) or Toll-Free at 1-800-245-5712.

SAMPLE

METHODS FOR CERTIFYING PROOF OF AGE

ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF PROOF

If proof is required in order to ensure the proper distribution of benefits to a member or the beneficiary of a member, the type(s) of proof listed below will be necessary for NPERS to make the legally-required factual determination.

To Prove Age

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A birth certificate recorded before age 5. **
2. Notification of registration of birth made before age 5. **
3. A religious record of birth or baptism recorded before age 5. (requires church official signature)
4. A delayed birth certificate.

**** A filing date and signature by Registrar is required or two proofs will be needed.**

OTHER PROOF - (Two or more forms will need to be provided)

1. Hospital birth record or certificate.
2. Physician's or midwife's birth records.
3. Bible or other family record.
4. Naturalization record.
5. Military record.
6. Immigration record.
7. Passport.
8. Selective service registration record.
9. Employer's record. Signed by Employer.
10. Marriage record.
11. A statement signed by the individual giving the reason why he or she cannot obtain other convincing evidence of age and the sworn statements of two other persons who have personal knowledge of the age that the individual is trying to prove.

To Prove Social Security Number

PREFERRED PROOF

1. Legible copy of the official Social Security Card.
2. Official Communication from the Social Security Administration on their official agency letterhead.

OTHER PROOF

1. Official communication from the Internal Revenue Service, United States Military or Immigration and Naturalization Service on their official agency letterhead.

To Prove Death

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A certified copy of or extract from the public record of death, or verdict of the coroner's jury of the state or community where the death occurred; or a certificate or statement of death issued by a local registrar or public health official.
2. A signed statement of the funeral director, attending physician, or official of an institution where death occurred.
3. A certified copy of, or extract from, an official report or finding of death made by an agency or department of the United States or any state.
4. If death occurred outside the United States, an official report of death by a United States Consul or other authorized employee of the United States Department of State, or a certified copy of the public record of death in a foreign country.

OTHER PROOF

1. The individual who must furnish evidence of death will be asked to explain the reason thereof and to submit other convincing evidence, such as sworn statements of at least two persons who have personal knowledge of the death. These persons must be able to swear to the date, time, place, and cause of death.

(CONTINUED ON BACK)

SAMPLE

METHODS FOR CERTIFYING PROOF OF AGE INSTRUCTIONS (PAGE 2)

To Prove A Valid Marriage

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A copy of the public record of the marriage, certified by the custodian of the record or by an NPERS employee.
2. A copy of a religious record of the marriage certified by the custodian of the record or by an NPERS employee.
3. The original certificate of marriage.

OTHER PROOF

1. A sworn statement of the clergyperson or official who performed the marriage ceremony.
2. Other convincing evidence, such as the sworn statements or at least two persons who have direct knowledge of the marriage, preferably eyewitnesses to the marriage ceremony.

To Prove That A Marriage Has Ended

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A certified copy of the decree of divorce or annulment.
2. Evidence of the death (see To Prove Death) of a party to the marriage.

OTHER PROOF

1. The marriage has ended cannot be obtained, the member or beneficiary must explain the reason therefore and submit other convincing evidence that the marriage has ended.

To Prove Parent-Child Relationships

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A copy of the member's or child's public or religious birth record made before the child was 5. If the record shows the same last name, it will be accepted as valid.

OTHER PROOF

1. Proof of the member's marriage or of the marriage of the member's parents, if needed to remove any reasonable doubt of the relationship.
2. Proof that the person claiming to be a child of the presumed parent would be able to inherit under intestate succession laws of the state where the death occurred (or in which the presumed parent had a permanent home)
3. A signed statement from the presumed parent that the person in question is his or her natural child.
4. A copy of a court order showing that the person in question has been declared to be the child of the presumed parent, or a copy of a court order requiring the presumed parent in question to contribute to the support of the person in question because such person is his or her child.
5. Or other such supporting evidence as may be required in order to establish the parent/child relationship.

To Prove Stepparent-Stepchild Relationships

PREFERRED PROOF

1. Proof may be determined by NPERS by means of the proof required under To Prove That A Marriage Has Ended to show a child's relationship (natural or adoptive) with the spouse of the presumed stepparent and that a valid marriage existed between the presumed stepparent and the spouse.

To Prove A Parent-Child Relationship By Legal Adoption

PREFERRED PROOF

1. A copy of the decree or order of adoption, certified by the custodian of the record.
2. A photocopy of the decree or order of adoption.
3. Evidence that the spouse of a decedent adopted the children of the decedent after the decedent's death, as specified in the above two subsections.

OTHER PROOF

1. In the event that the record of adoption is sealed by court order or by law, NPERS will accept as proof of adoption an official notice received by the adoption parents at the time of adoption that the adoption has been completed or a birth certificate issued as a result of the adoption proceeding.